

Application No. 09/909,353

Applicant has reviewed the Bohn patent and respectfully submits that it does not anticipate the invention recited in claims 1, 5, 8-10 or 14.

Independent claims 1 and 10 recite a knife sharpening system with "a base portion having an elongate guide rail having a top surface at a first level, a knife support means for maintaining a blade of a knife being sharpened with its blade edge spaced apart by a horizontal distance from the guide rail and for elevating the blade on a plane at a second level which is higher than the top surface of the guide rail..."

In contrast, the Bohn reference discloses a blade sharpening device with a platform 24 which is angled, upon which seats a stone shoe 44 to carry a sharpening stone 42. By moving the stone shoe 44 on the sharpening stone support table 24 in a circular manner, the knife blade 50 can be sharpened. In the Bohn device, there is no set angular correlation between the stone sharpening platform and the edge of the knife's blade. The Bohn reference states at column 1, lines 42-43 that "The Blade Sharpening Device will deliver a perfect plane at whatever angle the fixture is set,..." Applicant believes that this is an inaccurate statement. On curved knife blades, the surface to be sharpened does not lie on a flat plane -- it lies on a curved plane. Since in the Bohn reference the plane of the sharpening stone is restricted to a flat plane, it cannot be used to sharpen curved knives properly. If the plane on which the stone rests is at the desired sharpening angle, that angle will only be transferred to the knife at that point where the sharpener is at a right angle to the blade. In the Bohn reference, that appears to be a point about 30% of the distance from the handle of the knife to the tip of the knife. At all other points the angle will be different. In contrast, in the claimed knife sharpening system, since the guide walls can be curved, (as an example, see FIGS. 1, 3 and 5) the proper angle can be maintained from the tip to the shaft of the knife. Accordingly, while

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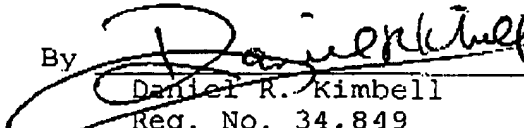
the Bohn device may allow a user to sharpen a knife, it has a different form than that claimed in claim 1.

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all of claims 1-15 recite patentable subject matter, and accordingly request prompt allowance of this application. If the Examiner has any questions, a telephone call to the undersigned would be welcomed.

Respectfully submitted,

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